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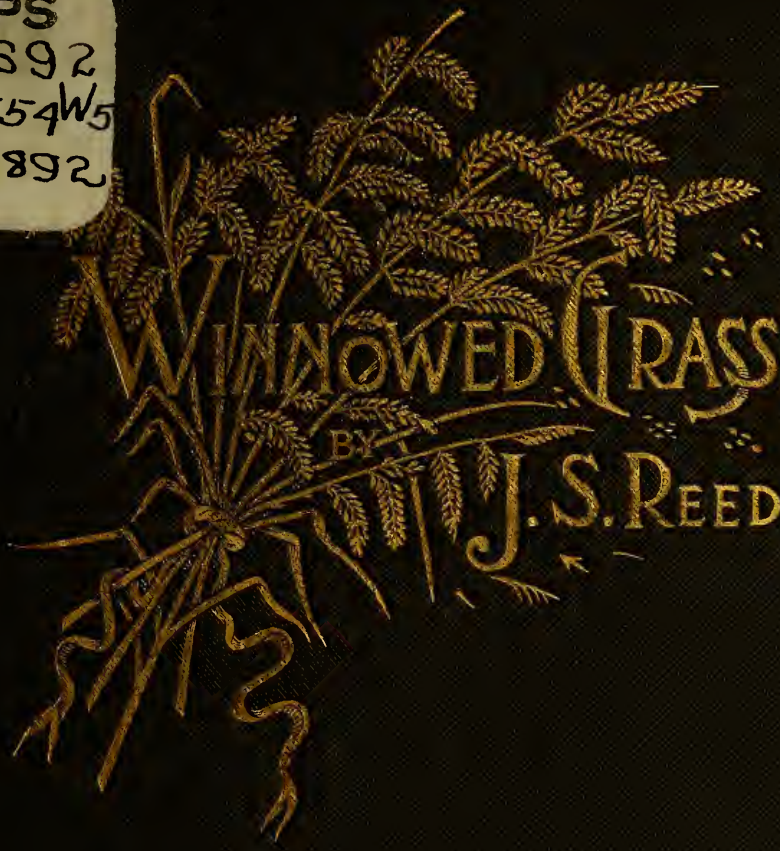

WINNOWED GRASSES

BY

J. S. REED

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1800

Mrs J A Gill
Sullivan Ind
Aug 21st/09

Consolation

The orange blossoms sweet perfume
Is wafted on the air
I follow on, and find the grove
With fruit still hanging there
I pluck a luscious golden globe
And feel like giving thanks,
That all the gold this world affords
Is not hoarded in the Banks.

Joseph Samuel Reed
Sullivan
Ind

1909 Aug. 21st
Saturday

Winnowed Grasses

BY

JOSEPH SAMUEL REED

THIRD EDITION

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TO MY MOTHER

WHOSE
LOVE AND SYMPATHY HAVE LENT
INSPIRATION FROM MY EARLIEST REMEMBRANCE;
WHOSE
EVER-WILLING EAR HAS
WEARIED NOT AT MY SIMPLE RHYME;
WHOSE WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT HAVE DONE
MUCH IN THE FURTHERANCE
OF THIS WORK,
THIS LITTLE BOOK OF VERSE
IS AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED

By The Author.

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THE JOURNEY OF LIFE.

Through life's eventful journey all must pass,
'T is so decreed, each for himself. Alas!
How sad the thought, 't is He alone can tell
How endeth each, in heaven or in hell.
Life's journey 's made with blinded eyes,
But for our good, that we be not too wise.
Ethereal things are meant beyond our ken;
Our province then should be on earth, but men.
Seek not to fly before thy wings are given,
For men are angels only when in heaven.
A station high or low we each must fill,
Depending much upon the actor's will;
Whether arduous or easy be the task,
Ourselves quite early must this question ask.
Determined once, the battle 's almost won;
But hesitate, the battle 's just begun.
Life's rugged path is narrow alike for all,
No favored few, but all that err must fall.
The path 's beset with danger all the way,
To tempt the pilgrim almost ev'ry day.
In childhood's morn the journey easy seems,
And glides along with constant, pleasant dreams;

All joy, no sorrow mars its perfect bliss,
Would it might remain in such a path as this.
But no; alas! Temptation trammels youth;
Joy yields to sorrow; falsehoods banish truth.
Such seems to be our mission, by Omniscience planned—
To fight life's battle bravely, tho' be it hand to hand.
In manhood's prime, the task is doubly great,
To curb the passions, not be led by fate;
Tho' in subjection, in us ambitions rise,
To wealth, distinction, power, look with eager eyes.
Conflict and carnage in some a great desire;
Vain pomp and glory others most admire.
Intemperance, sensuality, are others' goal
(No surer path on earth to lose the soul).
The flatterer's tongue, the subtlest of all,
We stop to listen, then heed, then fall.
No siren's song, however sweetly sung,
Is more alluring than the flatterer's tongue.
Inviting seems this spot to turn aside;
'T is hard to check our passions and our pride.
Here revelry and lust are holding sway,
How many thousands stop here by the way;
These gilded halls and palaces so grand,
For such as these are found on ev'ry hand,

To lure the weak and vain from virtue's ways;
Thus fallen once, they here eke out their days;
They doubtless think, we 'll but a moment learn,
Yet countless souls to virtue ne'er return.
Just in proportion to our vices' sway,
That far we 've wandered from the narrow way.
When hoary locks bedeck our aged head,
'T is then life's journey we 'll with pleasure tread.
The path, though narrow, 't will be strangely fair,
Obstructions once to us, will be no snare;
Vices, we 'll pass with unyielding grace;
The virtues, we 'll enjoy them, face to face,
And onward press, with duty's banner high;
Reward is ours, if we on Him rely.
The lesson taught can not be measured here,
Altho' observant be our heart and ear.
Give alms to those in want, relieve their cares,
For angels we may entertain then unawares.
The decalogue to follow all who may;
The golden rule keep sacred every day;
Accounting well for talents God has given,
Our duty do, and leave the rest to heaven.

A CHRISTMAS IDYL.

On Christmas eve, long years ago,
An old tradition tells,
The ground was covered o'er with snow,
The sleighs were gliding to and fro,
As mer'ly chimed the bells.
'T was in an eastern city laid,
A widow in her cottage near,
Her children in the door-yard played,
Tho' chill the evening they delayed
With not a dream of fear.

The eldest, Ralph, her only son,
A lad of twelve, and fair;
The daughter, Mina, full of fun,
Her voice a rare and charming one
That none with hers compare.
A stranger sudden drew his rein,
And cast his robes aside,
And in a tone of kindest strain,
This invitation to the twain,
"Come take a little ride."

'T was but a moment's brief delay
To join their new found friend;
They sprang into the open sleigh,
And soon were speeding on their way,
Unmindful of the end.
The stranger on his horses prest,
And spoke no word of cheer,
Sped on and onward to the west,
At length he halted for a rest
Out in the woodland drear.

Producing now a purse of gold,
Thus spoke he to the lad:
"May this increase an hundred fold
Before your mother waxes old,
And make her poor heart glad.
I 've tried in vain this child to get,
To cultivate her voice;
I vow it shall be famous yet,
Her brow set with a coronet
By the people as their choice.

"Go, quickly to your mother tell
What you 've seen and heard to-day;
No harm to Mina has befell,
I swear to keep her safe and well:
Go! we will go our way."

Ralph hastened to his mother's side
And told his awful tale;
They felt 't were better she had died;
With breaking hearts they cried and cried,
The neighbors heard their wail,

And when the awful truth was learned
They searched the country round;
Tho' every one detective turned,
Left not a single stone unturned,
No Mina could be found.
For days and days the widow's grief
Was as her child were dead;
At length a letter came; tho' brief,
The tidings gave her some relief,
And thus the letter read:

"Europe" (was the broad address)
"My dearest Mistress Gray:
Deem not my act a lawlessness,
My heart has bled in your distress,
Since your Mina went away.
Her voice, a diamond in the rough,
You may recall my notes, no doubt,
'T was then regarded as a puff,
Your means, I learned, were not enough,
To bring the luster out.

"This my sole purpose, thought and aim,
To guard this tender vine,
Till all in praises speak her name;
And written on the scroll of fame,
The glory all is thine.
Rejoice with me for Mina, then,
Who is now reconciled;
Tho' henceforth silent be our pen,
Adieu till her fruition, when
You may reclaim your child."

[*A lapse of ten years.*]

Ralph now to man's estate had grown,
So handsome, brave and stout;
Tho' ten long years at last had flown,
His absent sister still unknown,
He yet would seek her out.
Gold fever now was raging high,
And Ralph escaped it not;
To make his fortune he would try,
And bidding her a sad good-bye,
He left his mother's cot.

Fortune smiled upon her son,
His claim was richest ore;
E'en before two years were done,
He far exceeded every one,
How could he ask for more?
His riches ample, now his heart
Toward home and mother turned;
They ne'er had been so long apart;
As the day approached for him to start,
His heart more keenly yearned.

He stopped at 'Frisco for a day,
To purchase sundry things,
And while he wandered aimlessly,
He saw this placard frequently:
"To-night Miss Aimie sings."
Night had come, the day was spent,
The crowd surged left and right,
Our hero wondered what it meant,
And asked his neighbor, whither bent?
"Miss Aimie sings to-night."

Once in the meshes of the throng,
Our hero naught could do,
But join the votaries of song,
That to his nature did belong,
He could enjoy it, too.

Midst great applause the curtain rose,
The opera, in Italian sung;
Miss Aimie more in favor grows,
And yet her singing did disclose,
'T was not her mother tongue.

So oft recalled, at last she sung
A song she learned when but a child;
Her voice in sweetest cadence rung,
No string within her soul unstrung,
The people all went wild,
And failed to see our hero go
Behind the scene as song was thro';
They therefore could not see him throw
His arms around her; you must know
'T was Mina, and she knew him, too.

I 'll not describe this meeting more;
They did not sleep, suffice to say,
Thro' all the night, but talked it o'er,
Decided 't was her last encore,
And started home next day.
They felt 't would be indeed unwise
To meet their mother so abrupt;
They thought to lessen her surprise,
They 'd don a mendicant's disguise,
And beg bread as she supped.

'T was Christmas eve, the widow's light
Illumed the way to passers by;
The fire burned on the hearthstone bright,
The room was tidy set aright,
As with a practiced eye.
A knock was heard upon the door,
The lonely widow bade them "come;"
Two strangers meekly did implore
A crust of bread, they asked no more·
They had no friends or home.

The widow gave them what she had,
Her eyes with tear-drops shone;
"I have a cause for feeling sad,
And yet to give, it makes me glad;
I 've children of my own
Out on the world, some other hand
May give to them, as I to you,
My Mina 's in a foreign land,
And Ralph is o'er the prairies grand,—
They were my only two.

"They both were with me all this day,
Just twelve long years ago;
A stranger in a handsome sleigh
Enticed my little girl away—
We 'll meet no more, I know.

Two years ago my Ralph went west,
His fortune for to earn;
A kiss upon my cheek he pressed,
Said, 'Mother I will do my best
To hasten my return.'

"How very sad your lot must be,
Your tear-drops can not hide,
Your garments thin and worn I see,
I want you both to bide with me,
Until the Christmas tide."
Soon Mina did control herself,
And bid her tears be dry;
Espied her doll upon the shelf,
And very soon embraced the elf,
And sung a lullaby.

It was the one Ralph heard her sing
In 'Frisco on that night;
It could but sweetest mem'ries bring;
No mortal heard such warbling,
E'en angels 't would invite;
Now softest cadence, now more strong,
The enchantment was complete.
"That used to be my Mina's song,
None other could this voice belong,"
And fell at Mina's feet.

No actor quicker off disguise
Their garments silver sheen;
Imagine Mrs. Gray's surprise,
There stood before her very eyes,
A charming king and queen,
Who condescended then to shower
Their blessings so profuse;
Informed her of her wond'rous dower,
Embraced her, too, for full an hour,
Before they let her loose.

"I want to tell you of the one
Who took me o'er the sea;
'T was for my good that it was done,
No kinder heart beneath the sun
Than his has been to me.
Tho' I may never more appear
In public, as of yore,
I 'll hold my benefactor dear,
And only wish that he were here,
You 'd like him all the more."

Her mother felt these words were true;
'T was a blessing not disgrace;
Altho' the audience were but two,
Bade Mina sing an opera thro'
From tenor down to bass.

She sang as never e'en before,
  Her soul without alloy;
Her voice brought neighbors to the door,—
'T was not, indeed, her last encore,
  They shared her mother's joy.

For now had dawned sweet Christmas day,
  The neighbors spread a feast
In their abode, and happily
They passed the great event away,
  To the principals, at least.
Two years have passed; their little home
  Is very pleasant, you 'll allow;
The children never more did roam,
The stranger to them now is come,
  For he 's their father now.

DRAW THE LINE AT THAT.

If you 've loaned a friend a "Fiver,'
And you think him all correct,
Yet it 's longer in returning
Than you really could expect,
Should he come again to borrow,
Though your purse be rolling fat,
I would venture this suggestion,
"Better draw the line at that."

If, perchance, you 're in a quarrel,
And resort to fistic blows,
Do not boo-hoo like a baby
When he hits you on the nose;
Boldly stand your ground, young fellow,
Stay until he knocks you flat,
Then, if my advice is needed,
"Better draw the line at that."

Just suppose you 've been a-fishing,
Patiently from morn 'til night,
Tho' you 've tempting lively minnows,
Not as yet a single bite;

All at once your cork goes under,
Out of sight as quick as "scat,"
I should think that you were foolish
Not to "draw the line at that."

Then suppose you 're out a-sleighing,
With your lady friend at night,
And your horse, becoming frightened,
Starts to run with all his might;
Altho' your hands are both engaged
(In holding on your hat),
The safest thing is let her go,
And "draw the line at that."

A RACE FOR A BRIDE.

AN ENGLISH LEGEND.

In olden times when knight errantry was young,
Brave Briton's sons for gallant deeds were sung;
Great dangers braved almost at any cost,
Their chivalry was shown, no matter what was lost.
Such times as these was when this legend, true,
Occurred, 't is said, and I will tell it you.
In a dungeon old in Briton's oldest town
An aged man, and once of some renown,
In shackles stood with hair as white as snow.
He mimic rides with body to and fro;
The reins in fancy grasped, phantom whip applied,
Thus for fifty years he has not ceased to ride.
No crime had done, but reason all had flown;
Tho' great the cause, as by the legend shown.
A baron rich who was of wife bereft,
No son had he, an only daughter left.
Of beauty rare to womanhood had grown,
Two suitors had, that sought her hand to own.
Egbert B., an artist poor, yet true,
She much preferred, as well her father knew.

Gilbert C., a lord of noble birth,
Her father's choice, yet not of sterling worth.
Her father plead, resorted to abuse,
Made direst threats, but 't was not any use;
His last resort, a compromise was made,
He called them up as in a dress parade;
Thus spoke he them in terms of stern command;
"He must a horseman prove, that wins Clemanthe's hand.
It was my wish, 't is still my great desire,
My daughter's spouse should horsemanship admire;
For money lack I not, 't is my ambition's pride
My future son-in-law shall with distinction ride;
From Kennet's ivied tower bring thou an ivy vine,
Upon my daughter's brow an ivy wreath entwine;
Five dykes shall cross and recross, making ten;
A test like this will prove that ye are men.
The soonest back, upon my royal life,
Shall claim her hand, and she shall be his wife.
Go thou at once, and each a steed procure,
Fleetest of limb and hardship to endure;
Seek out the ones that can long distance run,
Twelve days report upon the rising sun."
Both bowing low, they hastened to depart,
Tho' troubled looked, yet each a hopeful heart.

They searched the turf wherever speed was shown,
They sought the marts, and ev'ry jockey known ·
Succeeding now as in their judgment best,
Must bide the time until the final test.
Sad, sad, indeed, those twelve long days were spent;
Clemanthe plead in vain her father to relent.
His purpose fixed he would not brook dismay,
But eager watched he for the fatal day.
"How can I aid my Egbert in his task?"
Incessantly she would herself this question ask.
"I have it, yes, I will the wizard try;
I must, and will save Egbert, or I die."
Softly she rose while stars were shining bright,
The wizard sought by Luna's silvery light,
And told him all, her father's cruel whim,
Of Egbert spoke, her wondrous love for him.
"O, sir!" she pleads, "I seek you now for aid,
Assist me, sir, you shall be richly paid."
The wizard's brain was cudgled for a while,
At length he sprang up quickly with a smile
Brought some herbs, and these directions gave:
"Thou follow these, if Egbert thou wouldst save.
This potion give to Egbert's rival's steed;
To Egbert's this—be careful that you heed,

Observing this, the potions must be given
Just at the hour the clock is striking seven,
For one 's a poison and 't will work its end ;
Adieu, my friend, and may good luck attend."
With joy she left the wizard's lonely cave,
Now feeling sure she could her lover save.
Her coachman sought she now with bated breath,
Instruction gave, 't was simply life or death.
She sought her room, yet not to sleep or rest,
For on the morrow comes the dreadful test.
At early morn she rose and dressed with care;
In satin gown and white, with blossom'd hair,
Her fairy form, her nymph-like mien and grace
Contrasted strangely with her sad sweet face.
The hour had come, with rivals each a groom,
With whip in hand and ready for their doom.
The baron smiled and said with much concern :
" Avaunt, my lads, and may you soon return."
They touched their caps and wheeling to the right
Applied their spurs and soon were out of sight.
We follow them in fancy ; on they speed,
Now neck and neck, now Gilbert in the lead.
The course is lined by crowds on either side,
To watch the novel way of winning bride.
Here shouts go up for Egbert as they pass,
Now Gilbert's better chance for winning lass.

They cross the dykes, how difficult the breach!
The end is near, the tower soon will reach.
Here they come with chargers all a-foam,
Now faced about and started back for home;
Tho' slower speed, 't was yet surprising fast,
The wonder was their enduring power should last.
So matched the steeds they being one in strength,
Yet one must win, if but a finger length.
Determined now, each face so plainly shown,
That Fate must choose the one and Fate alone.
Still flying on until four dykes have passed,
Now side by side and coming to the last.
Gilbert's steed here checked and pawed the ground
But Egbert's steed o'er leaped it with a bound;
Just at the instant o'er the dyke had sped,
He rearing, plunging, falling headlong dead;
The rider leaped, yet no dismay did show,
But onward ran, he 'd but a league to go.
Now looking back, his rival nearer come,
Yet feared he naught for he was almost home.
The gate is reached, he now stands by her side,
The wreath entwines and clasps his willing bride.
How brief their bliss, 't is painful to relate;
Would it were not, but such is cruel Fate.
The baron stared with eyes of flashing fire,
Gesticulating wild, could not retain his ire;

"Dam'd cur," he cried, "vile horsemanship have
shown,
My vow is naught, and you I'll never own.
Get thee from hence, thou low bred hireling race,
And never let me gaze on thine accursed face."
"Father!" she cried, "revoke thy cruel curse,
He's rich in virtue although poor in purse;
I 'll be his wife, let nothing part us now,
You 've pledged your word, and I 'll fulfill your
vow."
The baron's wrath increased beyond all bounds,
Rushed back and forth upon his royal grounds,
As if to nerve him for the awful crime,
Most unprovoked and flagrant of that time.
Clemanthe watched her father in despair,
And with her lover breathed a silent prayer.
He called again for Egbert to depart;
They silent stood like statues heart to heart.
He drew his sword and rushing tow'rd the twain,
Thrust through and through, thus by her father slain.
He stood there gazing but a moment on his child,
Conscious of the deed, shrieked loud and wild;
Withdrew the sword their precious blood had spilt,
Fell on the same and drove it to the hilt.
Gilbert C. was witness to the deed,
Dismounted not, but urging on his steed,

As if to gain some hoped for, wished for goal,
Away they sped, his steed beyond control.
As league on league he now unguided sped,
Until endurance ceased fell he exhausted dead.
The rider still in his own fancy rode,
Applied his whip, as aimlessly he strode,
Until his friends o'ertook and led his way;
We find him thus in prison cell to-day.
The wizard's herbs were given the reverse,
The cause of murder, suicide and curse.

A CHILD OF NATURE.

O! how pleasant 't is to wander
In the deep and quiet wood;
Oft in silence here I ponder,
Midst Dame Nature's solitude.
I dearly love the bright-eyed daisy,
As it becks and nods to me;
The horrid men, they must be crazy,
None its grace and beauty see.

See the mirrored trees a-waving
In the waters bright and clear,
And the weeping willows laving
Their drooping limbs, their hearts to cheer.
In every branch, and twig and leaflet
Is a sermon broad and grand,
One that every child of Nature
Can so easy understand.

See the birdies—precious nestlings,
With their ope'd wide scarlet throats,
When but on a brief to-morrow,
They 'll be trilling joyous notes.

The nimble squirrel and the rabbit
Love this broad expanse to roam;
Would that I could but inhabit
This charming place to call my home!

I love, indeed, each charming creature
That flies the air, or earth has trod;
In every attribute and feature
Shows the handiwork of God.
I often crave this isolation
By the brook's green carpet rim,
Holding sweet commune with Nature,
Draws me nearer unto Him.

SPRING ON THE FARM.

Of seasons all, that do most pleasure bring,
Thou gentle nymph be praised, sweet balmy Spring.
The swelling buds are motionless and dumb,
Yet they a language speak, "Fair Spring is come."
Thy coming brings us birds from sunny climes,
To carol notes to us; no sweeter chimes
Were heard, save in elysian bowers;
Companions mete, bright birds and fragrant flow'rs.
No fairy land without them ere can vie
In rare perfume and sweetest minstrelsy.
The purling brook and rivulet and rill
Thou bring'st to life, thro' all the winter still.
The finny tribe again once more are gay,
In sunshine basking in their wanton play.
Emerges now the turtle, lazily to bask
In hottest sunshine, tho' a seeming task;
In groups asleep they lie, perchance to dream;
On slightest sound plunge headlong in the stream.
All day the frogs in silence sit in rushy glade,
At even-tide in concert sing their nightly serenade;
The deep bass voices leading off, tenors chiming in,
Contraltos, treble, each in turn at intervals begin.

The nimble lambs in playfulness are seen
To congregate upon the hillside green;
As one surmounts a stump with eager zest,
Instructor now assumes to be for all the rest;
How odd the sight, yet may not this be true,
In silent language teach them how to do?
The chanticleer now crowing shrill and loud,
His brood observing, and is justly proud;
Industrious his helpmeet labors all the day,
Chastising any, should they not obey;
Yet guarding them, and out of danger brings,
By shelt'ring them beneath her spacious wings.
Alone the gander stands with such unrest
On one foot, keeping guard the hidden nest;
Should you, at last, his charge have found,
With outspread wings he comes with hissing sound.
The little calves, so gentle, yet so shy,
Uneasy quite, unless their dam is nigh,
Who watches them with keenest love and joy,
Exceeds the love the mother for the boy.
The martin-box, long tenantless and still,
Now filled with birds that labor with a will,
Rebuild their nests, as oft their heads protrude,
With thoughts intent upon the coming brood.
Fair Spring thou art, we 'll hold thee ever dear!
Thou 'lt bide till summer comes, return to us next year.

ORIGIN OF SANTA CLAUS.

A LEGEND.

Once on a time, it matters not
Just when and where, have quite forgot,
  Although my locks are hoary;
'T was told to me this legend true
And faithfully will tell it you,
  This legendary story.

He was once a little shepherd lad,
With never an inclination bad,
  Through all his life's gradation;
He herded sheep by hills and brooks,
And all the while was reading books,
  Thus fitted to rule a nation.

'T is said of him, when but a child,
His countenance was soft and mild
  As the tenderest little baby;
All loved him, yet I know not why;
That merry twinkle of his eye
  Was half the reason, may be.

The children gather'd 'bout his knees,
Climbed on his back with perfect ease;
But 't was his greatest pleasure
To furnish candies, nuts and toys
To all good little girls and boys
And in no scanty measure.

'T was in the reign of a wicked king
(I truly wish there was no such thing,
Especially one that 's jealous),
Our hero was despised by him,
That he could rend him limb from limb,
E'en worse than that they tell us.

Now in his rage his trumpet blew,
Brought forth his royal retinue,
Thus spoke of the one he dreaded:
"Have him brought to yonder tower,
Mark well my words, in one short hour
The rogue shall be beheaded."

The edict flashed like lightning's fire,
To children what could be more dire!
'T was awful beyond all knowing;
Almost as quick as I can tell,
The court was thronged, and citadel
Was full to overflowing.

"O King!" they cried, mid sobs and tears,
"He 's been so very good for years,
Indeed we can not bear it
To have him murdered, 'cause he 's good,
He 's done no wrong, that 's understood,
And we 're all here to swear it."

"Now by my faith you 're very brave,
Endanger your lives your friends to save,
'T is really to be commended;
Yet he a curse to me has been,
I 've tried in vain your love to win;
It must and shall be ended.

"Mark! This, alone, can save your friend,
Your love and adoration end,
And love no one before me;
Transfer your love to me, your king,
And I will countless blessings bring,
If you will but adore me."

"No, no!" They cried with one accord,
"We 'll never cease to love our lord,
But cherish him forever;
With breaking hearts, we promise this—
If you will but our friend dismiss,
To love you both endeavor."

"No! By my soul your friend shall die;
No greater man shall live than I,
'T is useless now to ask it;
Go! Headsman, order bells to toll,
His head shall in an instant roll
Down in the bloody basket!"

Our hero, standing by the block,
The sobbing children 'round him flock,
He asks the king the reason;
"Is it for crime, or murder? No!
Because the children love me so,
O, King, is this called treason?"

The king for shame now hung his head,
He knew the truth the man had said,
Yet would change his edict never;
"Although I grant your power and will,
The children, they will love me still,
And I 'll love them forever.

"Hereafter by supernal laws,
You 'll speak of me as Santa Claus,
The old, good-natured fairy;
Although I come 'mid snow and ice,
I 'll bring you ev'ry thing that 's nice,
In my overcoat, all hairy.

"Now, precious ones, I 'll say adieu,
And make this solemn vow to you,
Because I love you dearly,
Tho' I may dwell in Northern clime,
I 'll visit each on Christmas time,
With sleigh and reindeer, yearly."

* * * * * *

All know how well his vow 's been kept,
Even while the children slept
He 's traversed lands and waters;
His presents found on Christmas morn,—
Almost before the day is born,—
By our darling sons and daughters.

TO THOS. A. HENDRICKS.

IN MEMORIAM.

A day of thanks is turned to grief,
  Our Nation mourns instead;
Alas! too true, our pride and chief
  Beloved Hendricks 's dead.

Forbid that we should censure Him
  Who watches us with care,
Yet seemingly He chose the one
  Our Nation least could spare.

A statesman great, a patriot true,
  For the right he ever stood;
Honesty was all he knew,
  None knew him but for good.

In party faith convictions strong
  (For all this right reserve),
He being right could not be wrong,
  Nor from his duty swerve.

Aside from party, all in praise
Speak volumes of his worth,
His intellect like sun's bright rays
In splendor shining forth.

He 's now at rest, his labor 's done,
It can but give us pain
To lose "Indiana's favorite son,"
Nor see his like again.

To history, in after years
We 'll point with perfect pride;
To Morton and our Hendricks, too,
We 'll find them side by side.

Quite balanced they in intellect,
Men of gigantic brain;
Each their party did protect,
Tho' brothers in the main.

May we so live, in death no dread,
That when life's journey 's past,
We, too, can say, as he has said,
Thank Heaven, "I 'm free at last."

HOME.

Home, the dearest spot on earth,
  Tho' many miles be intervening,
And if it be our place of birth,
  It bears a still more sacred meaning;
Far reaching does its influence spread,
  With mother, queen of home, adorning;
What brightness does her minist'ring shed,
  As a gentle sun on April morning.

Lord or peasant may dwell there,
  No titled coat of arms essential;
No high distinction can compare
  Where hearts' content, far more potential.
It may be mansion or a cot,
  Antiquate, or latest fashion;
High or low, it matters not,
  Where love 's the only ruling passion.

Every act should mutual be,
  As round the family altar kneeling,
With one accord should bend the knee,
  To God and country's weal appealing.

It may be east, north, south or west,
In woodland, plain, or crowded city:
T is where the mind and heart 's at rest,
Responsive to all calls of pity.

Let social games be favored here,
We admonish parents, never mind them,
Where these are not, we have a fear
Your boys will go elsewhere to find them
Let sunlight shine in every room,
By being cheerful, kind and pleasant,
'T will certainly dispel all gloom,—
At roll call, each will answer "present.

The home is, therefore, after all,
Just what the members try to make it;
Deem not your door a guarded wall,
But free for each and all to take it.
A home ideal, thus you see,
We need but strive and 't will be given;
In truth, it is but one degree
Below the pearly gates of heaven.

DUFFEY'S VALENTINE.*

The story as told me, of Duffey's mishap,
Began something after this wise:
James Duffey, a handsome and promising chap,
Loved a girl, yet that 's no surprise.
Bess Brown was the being he so much adored,
And he cared not a whit that 't was known;
He'd sparked her too often, now to be bored,
And he called her his darling, his own.

He loved her quite fondly, the story relates,
This hazel-eyed, pretty gazelle;
His love was returned, it too, also states,
As true lovers only can tell.
There is always a "bitter along with the sweet"
(An adage well known to be true).
Bess Brown had a rival—Miss Dorothy Treat—
Who dearly loved James Duffey, too.

Hate does n't begin to express his contempt
For Miss Treat, who indeed loved him so;
On every occasion she 'd make an attempt
To inveigle Jim in for her beau.

* Paraphrased from M. Quad's Duffey's Valentine.

Thus matters went on until Valentine's Day,
Jim bought a supply when in town;
A horrid old comic was purchased for Treat,
The sweetest of Cupid's for Brown.

He enclosed a sweet missive to the one he adored,
Asking her heart and her hand;
Likewise to Miss Treat, tho' love he ignored,
In language most haughty and grand.
In addressing the notes—'t is sad to relate—
He made an egregious mistake;
Love's message it sped to the one he did hate,
To his loved one the comic did take.

[*Skip three days.*]

He was wholly unconscious of what he had done,
While Miss Treat was in rapturous bliss;
She started for Duffey's, and went on a run,
To fall in his arms with a kiss.
Rushed in the room unannounced, what a shame,
(He was thinking of Bess—soon his wife)—
Almost out of breath she then did exclaim:
"Take me, James; I 'm yours, yours for life."

He told her quite plainly he'd not take her at all,
And tore from her loving embrace;
Then rushed to the attic just over the hall,
With a look of despair on his face.
Miss Treat took her leave, tho' never dismayed,
For his letter to her she possessed;
On her rival she'd call, and her offer parade,
In a manner Bess Brown would detest.

Now Bess was amused and fearful withal,
His handwriting he failed to conceal;
Her beau had a sister on whom she could call,
And to her the secret reveal.
Had often before, could now, without doubt,
With safety her secret confide;
She started for Duffey's by the nearest known route
And stood at the front door outside.

Their bonnets, a striking resemblance each bore,
(Am sure I know not who 's to blame);
So also it happened the dresses each wore
And in stature the girls were the same.
From the window above our hero could see,
To keep posted on warfare without.
"Look! Treat has returned as sure as can be;
Young lady, I 'll put you to rout."

He now did a most ungentlemanly thing,
It is but right you should know;
Took a bucket of water and gave it a fling,
Straight down on the figure below.
Damp and indignant she turned on her heel,
Though never a syllable spoke.
Homeward she wended, yet could not but feel
That the letter was meant for no joke.

It occurred to our hero, 't would be in good taste
To call on his darling, his Bess;
Emerged from the attic, departed in haste,
Full assured that his answer was yes.
The door of the parlor was standing ajar,
Nothing wrong to walk in, take a seat;
The snow without blinded, he could n't see far,
Or he would have discovered Miss Treat.

Her eyes more accustomed to the darkness inside
At once to our hero she swept:
He thinking, of course, 't was Bessie, his bride,
In a loving embrace there they wept.
There are times in our life that Providence seems
To take a conspicuous part;
It often, too, happens in lovers' young dreams,
An apparent mischance breaks a heart.

'T was so in this case—a strong gust of wind
Blew open the shutters full wide;
Just at this moment Miss Bessie appeared
And ordered the intruders outside.
Treat tightly held on to her darling, her James,
Until reaching the sidewalk and street;
Our hero was naughty, and called her bad names,
Thus making them strangers complete.

Now, Duffey returned to his Bessie at once,
The horrid mistake to explain:
She would not believe him, and called him a dunce,
And turned up her nose in disdain;
She told him to go to his Dorothy Treat
And never to darken her door;
He walked away sadly and felt his defeat,
While vengeance on women he swore.

Breach of Promise was entered, very next court,
To prove it, his letter was read;
The jury decided to break up the sport–
"For the plaintiff, five thousand," they said.
Dorothy, now with this nice little sum
Began for the future to plan,
'T would be an incentive for others to come,
Thus wage war upon a fresh man.

Moral.

Young girls, listen now to this piece of advice,
And I trust you will follow it, too;
Don't waste your affections, no matter how nice,
Till you're certain the fellow loves you.
Young men, I've a simple suggestion to make,
Which I feel it my duty to give,
In addressing your missives, don't make a mistake—
You'll regret it as long as you live.

THE STORY OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

I purpose telling you in rhyme
  Of experience dearly bought,
By a traveler in ancient time;
  Old Jericho he sought.
On foot, he started out alone,
  Light-hearted, strong of arm,
Courageous, he no fear had known
  Nor bode he any harm.

His journey lay through forests deep,
  Meandering streams abound,
Clustering pines on mountains steep
  With cones so large and round;
Thus journeyed he, nor drew apace
  Tho' wearied sore was he,
He 'd reached a wild and lonely place,
  Close by the rolling sea.

New danger now awaits him here,
  And for it ill-prepared;
A band of robbers here appeared,
  Nor was the traveler spared.

They stripped his raiment, took his purse,
And thinking he was dead,
Then departed with a curse,
"He 'll tell no tales," they said.

Half unconscious there he lay,
Bemoaning every breath,
When lo! a Levite comes this way,
To look on the face of death.
"O, Son of Levi! Help!" he cried,
In tones of deep despair;
He passed by on the other side,
Unfeeling left him there.

"Help! Help!" he cried, in louder tones,
His wounds his mind had crazed,
A priest attracted by his groans,
Drew near and on him gazed.
"O! priest of the temple, holy man,
Come help me, or I die;"
He paused, the while his face to scan,
Yet deigned he no reply.

Tho' recognizing him full well,
As one of his kith and kin,
No brotherly love did in him dwell,
No kindly heart within.

His office made him quite devout,
Long-faced and loud of prayer;
With no remorse he turned about,
Withdrew and left him there.

He quiet lay, all hope had fled,
Despair shone out his face,
A Samaritan this way was led,
An enemy to his race.
"Man of Samaria, pity me,
My race have me decried."
The Samaritan on bended knee
Was quickly at his side.

"What have we here, an Israelite,
By the wayside, almost dead?
Poor fellow! he will famish quite,
Without some drink and bread.
Cheer up, my friend, your thirst now slake,
From out my pitcher here;
Also do thou this garment take,
I 'm thy neighbor, do not fear.

"My friend arise and lean on me,
For you are very weak;
You need a surgeon, too, I see,
We must a refuge seek."

To a friendly inn he took him thence,
And said with much concern,
"Host, care for him at my expense,
I 'll pay on my return."

The lesson here designed to teach
Should obvious be to all;
'T is this, "to practice what you preach;"
Do right, tho' the Heavens fall.
Friendship true, and Brotherly Love
Go hand in hand through life,
And always will a blessing prove
Here in this world of strife.

'T is not professing certain creeds
That insures our sins forgiven,
But kindly acts and loving deeds,
That make us shine in Heaven.
Indeed, 't is said in Holy Writ,
Of Charity alone,
If we have but the lack of it
Our Father 'll never own.

'T is not vocation, race, or dress,
That makes men kind and true,
But 't is the heart that they possess
That reaches out to you.

Calamity may each befall,
And be a bitter cup,
But loving hands will ever cail
And help to lift you up.

THE SOLDIER'S FAREWELL.

Farewell, that word, if fitly spoken,
Gives us but pain, the weary heart unrest;
'T is but a guide, an index, sign, a token
Of emotions deep that dwell within our breast.

Farewell to friends, is always said in sorrow,
With deep regret we take them by the hand,
Reflecting thus that on the brief to-morrow
Estranged from us and in a distant land.

Farewell to father, dear farewell to mother,
It breaks our hearts, and gives us untold woe;
Farewell to sister, and farewell to brother,
Our pent-up tears do now unbidden flow.

Farewell to wife, by far the hardest trial,
Our country calls us now in deadly strife,
To leave her thus, indeed no worse denial,
Were asked of us, with e'en our very life.

The children, dear, how can we leave them?
They dream not what our fate may be,
Apprise them not for 't will but grieve them
To learn, perchance, their father ne'er may see.

Farewell to sweetheart, young and winsome creature
Self-sacrificing, dutiful and brave;
Her trials marked, alas, in every feature,
Yet swerves she not, her country's name to save.

No farewells said beyond this world of sadness
No battles waged, upon that happy shore;
There 'll be instead, all peace, and joy, and gladness,
In that blest clime, where partings all are o'er.

MEMORIAL DAY.

When Sumter's gun was heard to peal
  Its warnings to the North,
Caused patriotic hearts to feel
  The need of coming forth,
Our country's honored name to save,
  To dare, to do, or die;
"Oh, may our flag of union wave,"
  Was then the battle cry.

War waged against a foreign foe
  Is bad enough, indeed,
To battle those we do not know
  Must cause our hearts to bleed;
Yet, a nation pitted 'gainst itself
  (As 't was in sixty-one),
A thousand times more awful,
  For 't was father 'gainst the son.

A call for volunteers was made,
  The "boys" did quickly come,
Marched in review and dress parade,
  To the step of fife and drum!

I see a widow's only son,
In fancy, don the blue,
With canteen, haversack and gun,
His mother bid adieu

To him, who was her all in all;
Said, as he rose to go,
"My son, be brave, if you must fall,
Let your face be to the foe."
I will not trace this warfare through,
Those four long years of pain,
Privation, suffering and death,
May it ne'er recur again.

Each side was well commanded,
By Generals Grant and Lee,
The South at last surrendered,
At the Appomattox tree.
'T was cause of great rejoicing,
Our hopes were realized
That our country be a unit,
And but one flag recognized.

Through battles all, the widow's son
Recalled his mother's word,
He changed his cartridge box and gun
For shoulder straps and sword.

In sixty-five he wrote her,
"I 'll soon be home, no doubt,
For the war is nearly over,
Then I 'll be mustered out."

Fate will'd that this was not to be;
In the Wilderness campaign,
Our hero, bent on victory,
Was numbered with the slain.
The stars and stripes his winding sheet,
Was sent to his mother's cot;
They bore him thence with martial feet
To the family burying lot.

The minute guns were fired,
As they lowered him to his rest,
"Thank God, my boy was valiant,
For the bullet pierced his breast."
We decorate this grave, to-day,
Symbolizing thousands more
Of gallant soldiers in the fray,
Who ' ve crossed to the other shore.

Fond mem'ry brings our comrades back,
(This precious boon we crave),
Not as they moulder here, alack,
In the dark and silent grave;

But as true soldiers dressed in blue
In mem'ry now are seen,
Shared rations oft with me and you,
And drank from the same canteen.

Marched side by side through thick and thin,
Each other's burdens bore,
Faltered not in battle's din
Or the cannon's awful roar.
'T was in defense of the stripes and stars,
We battled on like men,
Forgetful of unsightly scars,
Or the southern prison pen.

This loving service tells us all
That man is prone to die;
No matter be he great or small,
Death hearkens not our cry;
But cuts us down with sickle keen,
(How brief our earthly span)!
'T was only but on yester e'en—
The infant—now the man.

These darksome sepulchres so cold,
Wherein our comrades lay,
In reality, but merely hold
Their tenements of clay;

Once disenthralled, their spirits sped
To Him who gave them light,
To join those of the countless dead
In the land where there's no night.

'T is meet that we employ these hours,
As by headquarters plann'd,
'T is meet that we bestrew these flowers
With a reverential hand
Upon the graves of those we love:
'T is a symbol true, I ween;
Those gone away to the realm above,
Are kept in memory green.

Then brightest flowers let us bring,
All laden with perfume,
Emblematic of eternal Spring,
Where Eden bowers bloom.
Appointed once for man to die—
We can not always stay—
They may strew the graves of you and me,
As we strew these to-day.

We can not help the dead of ours,
Whose names we now revere,
By strewing bright and fragrant flowers
On graves recounted here;

Simply our esteem reveal,
For their brave and daringness ;
We do it freely, for we feel
We ought do nothing less.

Then let our dear, brave comrades sleep—
Distinction they have won—
Let whisp'ring winds their vigils keep,
For valiant service done.
Their peaceful souls be troubled not—
Peace reigns with us supreme—
No more they 'll hear the picket shot
Nor see the sabre's gleam.

No more they 'll hear the bugle call,
No more the reveille,
Not once again in line will fail,
No dress-parade will see ;
No more on picket duty placed,
No counter-signs be said,
Until the resurrection from
The bivouac of the dead.

A PREACHER FROM TEXAS.

A preacher from Texas late had his demise,
And straightway to Heaven he rode;
Saint Peter could hardly conceal his surprise,
When informed of his recent abode.
The Saint ope'd the portal, bade him walk in,
And gave him a harp and a crown;
Imagine the preacher's surprise and chagrin,
When he found not a soul from his town.

He remarked to Saint Peter, when out for a stroll,
"This seems most exceedingly queer,
In all of my labors, I 've saved not a soul,
I hoped to find every one here."
"Remember, dear doctor," Saint Peter replied,
"There 's a rival attraction below,
And is well patronized, it can 't be denied,
As report of last census will show."

"Perhaps 't would be better to aid your unrest,
Of His Majesty's realm to learn;
In purchasing ticket, let me suggest,
A double one, good for return."

Uneventful the ride, as downward he flew,
Deep darkness, superlative night,
Till Old Vulcan's forge appeared to his view,
Which made a most uncanny light.

Satan advanced, as he stepped from his car
(Observing his clerical mein),
"Friend, are you certain you know where you are?
An odd place for preachers, I ween."
"A visitor, merely," replied the divine,
Betraying no tremor of fear,
"My flock it has wandered, I can but opine,
A number are living down here."

Satan was silent, yet grimaced askance,
Then chuckled with fiendish delight,
The preacher but needed a cursory glance,
To learn that his surmise was right.
Satan stepped forward and offered his arm
(For he of politeness can boast),
"To my guests there can happen no possible harm,
And you 'll find me a generous host."

He was guided throughout the Realm of Fire,
And he saw not a few of his sheep:
The pillars, and deacons, and all of his choir,
Impelled him to silently weep.

His Majesty said: "'T is my duty, dear guest,
To inform you the day of your train."
"Nick, show me a scalper that wants to invest,
I 've made up my mind to remain."

TORRID WEATHER.

(*100° in Shade.*)

We can not keep cool, and therefore we grumble;
We can not get even one short cooling breath;
We lie in our hammocks, we roll and we tumble,
We tumble and roll, nearly worried to death.
We now are attired in the scantiest clothing,
A Fiji or Hottentot e'en put to shame.
Yet to wear even this, it gives us a loathing,
We 'd imitate Eve, if 't were not for the name.

O, for a lodge in the frigidest ocean!
O, to embrace the hidden North Pole!
Anything cooling, e'en a "cold pizen potion,"
To disseminate heat, tho' it freezeth the soul.
O! for an iceberg of gigantic proportion
(Not barely just one, but, rather, a fleet);
To guarantee even a snooze, I 've a notion,
'T would take one at our head, and two at our feet.

Come down, Mr. Blizzard, and pay us a visit,
Come with your frigidity, fury and fuss;
It can not be hotter in Sheol—now is it?—
Than the weather we 're having at present with us.

Yes, come right along, sir, don 't tarry a minute,
Leave no one at home, sir, but bring entire crew,
I venture a farthing, when once you are in it,
There ne'er was a hotter reception for you.

Off goes your ear-muffs, and great coat, I trow, sir,
When once you are subject to our torrid laws,
'T will warm even charity, and you, too, I know, sir,
Contented you 'll be with the thinnest of gauze.
How can we endure this dry, torrid weather?
'T will last how much longer, I wonder who knows?
I 'm ready to vacate this world altogether,
If only allowed to return when it snows.

THE OPERA BONNET.

How fresh in my mind is the opera bonnet,
That looms up before me, obstructing my view,
That has from a titmouse to condor upon it;
I damaged my vision, but could not see through.
Still distorting my body, quite like a great noodle,—
To see but an actor, it seems such an age;
But look! my obstructor 's caressing her poodle,
I now have an excellent view of the stage.
That far-reaching bonnet,
That stop-vision bonnet,
That horrible bonnet, that bane of the stage.

That sweet little actress, of her I 'm enamored,—
To gaze on her beauty is rapture and bliss.
But up comes that horrible bonnet,—Dog hammered!
I did not get even to throw her a kiss.
Oh, what shall I do? I can no longer bear it!
Shall I go for a "clove," my ire to assuage,
Or grapple that bonnet, into carpet rags tear it,
And scatter the demon all over the stage?
That top-heavy bonnet,
That sky-tow'ring bonnet,
That infernal bonnet, the bane of the stage.

HOOSIER DIALECT POEMS.

HOW AUNT MARIER SPENT THE HOLIDAYS.

Sam, our second boy, you know,
  Thet hankered efter knowledge
And settled down in Chicago,
  When he had got thro' college,
An' married jist six years ago,
  Not one of us had seed 'em;
They writ us lots of letters tho',
  How glad we wus to read 'em.

We had n't heerd fer quite a spell,
  When we got another letter,
All printed out in purple ink,—
  "They must be doin' better,"
Says Josh to me, an' begun to read,
  "Chicago, twelfth an' secon',
Dearborn Av., Flat twenty-one,"
  They 'r broke up now, I reckon.

"My dear old father, mother, too,
  I hasten to address you;
'T is been an age since last we met,
  I love you still, God bless you!

We want you both to visit us,—
Spend holidays, vacation;
'T will do you good, and then, besides,
To see your new relation.

"I 've dealt in margins strong of late,
Like little Jacky Horner,
'Put in a thumb, pulled out a plumb;'
In fact I 've 'held a corner.'
I 've been a bear for ninety days,
Have made the bulls look sulky,
By buying short and selling long,
My bank account is bulky.

"So come along and don't delay
(I enclose you railroad passes),
'T will be a glorious holiday,
For my little bonnie lasses.
I 've told them you would surely come,
They must not catch me fibbing;
I 'll only say good-bye till then,
Your son, J. Samuel Gribbing."

I says to Josh, for pity sake
What is our Sammy doin'?
He must be goin' with a show,
An' actin' like a bruin.

"He 's on the Board o' Trade," says Josh,
"A-makin' of the prices,
The bulls push up, the bears pull down,
The father of a crisis."

Says I to Josh, we both can 't go;
Says he, "An' more 's a pity,
You never rid on the kivered keers,
Ner scacely seed a city.
But then, expect you 'd better go,
Fer 't is time you wus a lernin';
I 'll stay an' feed an' milk the cows,
An' do the chores an' churnin'."

We sot the day fer me to start,
An' it was n't long a-comin',
An' when I took the kivered keers,
My lands! they went a-hummin'.
I couldn't help but watch the things
Go flyin' past the winder;
My journey's eend wus gettin' near,
Thar warn't a thing to hinder.

"Chicago!" shouted the lantern man,
An accomodatin' feller,
Who help'd me with my carpet-sack,
Ban'-box an' umbereller.

A big blue-coated man, says he,
"Where is your destination?"
I aint got none, says I to him,
I 'm boun' fer my relation.

I handed Sammy's letter out,
An' he read the numbers in it.
Says he to me, "You 'll take the grip,
Be off in half a minit."
I told him I hed hed the *grip*
An' ev'ry other ailin';
"Here, Aunty, take this cable grip,"
An' he sent me off a sailin'.

I got off when the fixin' stopped,
An' looked this way an' tother;
Thar warn't a single *flat* in sight,
Each *tall* jist like the other.
I noticed number twenty-one,
With lions guardin' by it;
Was ruther feard to venter up,
But tho't I 'd better try it.

I give the bell a monstrous pull
(I lerned that back in Posey);
A woman opened up the door,
With cheeks all round and rosy.

"Is this my Sammy's wife?" says I,
"Your card, I must present it;"
"I don't play keerds," I made reply,
In a manner thet I meant it.

Jist then my Sammy happened in
An' raley know'd his mother,
An' called his wife and childern in,
An' made me nearly smother
With hugs and kisses all to onct;
It was a happy greetin',
The happiest day that I hev hed
Sence at our love-feast meetin'.

I told him why Josh didn't come,
Still it couldn't help but fret him.
Says he, "My joy is incomplete;
I wish I could have met him;
Yet I 'm so thankful that you came,
I must forget all others.
He put his arms around my neck,
"'T is mine, the best of mothers."

I up an' told him all the news,
'Bout the meetin' house a-burnin',
Of the 'lection we 'd hed of late,
'Bout everybody turnin';

'Bout ole Dobbin runnin' off
When haulin' in pertaters;
Bout Phelps' gals a-goin' to town
A lernin to be waiters.

Told him 'bout his ole sweetheart
'Lopin' with Jack Blivin,
An' comin' back to her parent roof
Ready to be forgiven.
The old folks actin' sensible,
Withdrawin' their objection.
They 's got as good a son-in-law
As any in that section.

Sammy showed me thro' the house;
He said it all wus his'n;
Of marble, stone, an' iron too,—
It seemed more like a prison;
A dozen rooms or more in all
With 'lectricity wus lighted,
An' heated with a biler, too,—
My Sammy wus delighted.

They hed spring cheers in ev'ry room,
An' carpets velvet fillin';
Spring beds and big flat mattresses,
An' this to me wus killin';

I wouldn't give my feather bed,
An' tick with new straw scented,
Fer all the springs an' mattresses
Thet ever wus invented.

I couldn't help but think of him,—
Fer a person's mind will wander,—
'T was Sammy, in his boyhood days,
On our homestead way back yonder.
I believe thet he wus happier then,
Not a single hour wus gloomy,
Then with his riches of to-day,
An' mansion grand and roomy.

They took me out to see the sights,—
I promised not to worry,—
The people went which ever' way,
An' all seem'd in a hurry;
They didn't even stop to speak,
Rushed past your Aunt Marier
As if their folks wus nearly dead,
Er goin' to squench a fire.

They took me 'round to see the parks,
An' the animals a-showin',
A big white house, they called it green,
With flowers in it growin'.

I wouldn't venter on the lake,
  I whispered to my darter,
I b'leeve in sprinkalin', y' know,
  I 'm a leetle 'feard o' warter.

We went one night to the opery;
  When the curtain bell went ringin'
They didn't give 'em time to dress,
  Till they hed 'em out a singin'.
They did n't 'pear a bit ashamed,—
  I wouldn't tho't they 'd do it,—
They hed on lots of skeeter bar,
  But easy to see through it.

I liked Sam's family awful well,
  An' they all 'peared to love me.
They didn't act a bit stuck up,
  Like city folks above me.
I 'd been with them, now jist a week,
  An' must start back to-morry,
An' when I tho't o' leavin' them
  It made me feel so sorry.

Sam says to me, "I 've plenty wealth,
  We mean that you shall share it,
I present you with this silken gown,
  An' beg of you to wear it;

We give a company to-night,
In honor of your visit,
The only thing that I regret,
That father needs must miss it."

"I 'm much obleeged to you, my boy,"—
Great tears my eyes wus sheddin',—
"The last silk dress I ever wore
Wus at your father's weddin'.
I 'll wear it at your party, son ;
Altho' I 've gray hairs plenty,
I 'll jine so yearnest in the fun,
They 'll think I 'm five and twenty.

"But hev you got your cookin' done
Fer company folks, now Sammy?
'No!' Then you 'd better clear the way
An' leave it to your mammy.
I 'll make two hundred crullers, Sam,
An' twist cakes, nothin' shorter.
Git cider sweet an' cider hard,
Five gallons each, you orter."

Sam told his man with the paper cap,
Who seemed a little daunted,
To give me freedom of the house,
Er anything I wanted.

I rolled my sleeves, pinned up my dress,
An' buckled right into it;
The time, it seemed so short to me,
'Till I was dun and through it.

The time hed come fer me to primp,
Fer company folks hed gethered,
My silk dress made me shine jest like
A peacock lately feathered.
Sam introduced me all around,
I felt relieved when thro' it;
He wus so happy, I 'll be bound,
He felt right proud to do it.

They hed the games of Crokinole,
Of Tiddledeewinks, Parcheesi,
I didn't much object to these,
So harmless an' so easy;
But when it come to playin' keerds,
Excuse your Aunt Marier;
I tuck them blamed ole yuker decks
An' throwed 'em in the fire.

They danced aroun' the room by twos,
In a ruther purty motion,
Yit nothin' like ole "weaverly wheat,"
Accordin' to my notion.

I ordered all the fiddlin' stop'd,
An' we play'd ole Sister Phoeby;
The way I cut the pigeon wing
Would rival Queen o' Sheby.

Your Aunt obsarv'd sum snickerin',
But she did n't keer a hooter,
She hes a way of straightenin' things
When they do n't go to suit her.
She tuck the lead in other plays,
Thet all the folks admired,
An' spoke of her in perfect praise,
Before they all retired.

Next day I kissed 'em all good-bye,
With a blessin' "God protect you!
You say you 'll visit us next year;
Do n't fail, fer we 'll expect you."
Sam tuck me to the depo' place;
Jist before the keers hed started,
He put a brass check in my hand,
We said good-bye and parted.

Josh give the check to the baggage-man,—
I aint tellin' you no story,—
He rolled us out a leather trunk
Big 'nuff fer Queen Victory.

We opened it when we got home,
An' we wus quite delighted;
Our Sam had sent a notion store,
Fer both of us united.

We found this note, "Accept this, please,
From your second son who made it;
Do n't feel that any thanks are due,
You 've a thousand times repaid it."
I wus tellin' Josh the nice time I 'd hed,
An' he did n't look so pleasin';
"Begosh I 'll let the cows go dry
An' go myself next season."

UNCLE JOSH AT A CHRISTMAS TREE.

I went to town a Christmas eve,
  Fur the second time this season;
'Lowed may be I 'd stay all night,
  Marier 'd know the reason;
I wanted to see a Christmas tree,
  An' see jist how they run it;
Since things turned out as they did,
  I 'm awful glad I dun it.

I never seed a "tree" afore,
  Nur had n't much idear;
I took a seat clear up in front,
  So I could see and hear.
Found I wus ruther early tho',
  For they wus still arrangin'
Purty things all 'round the tree,
  An' now an' then a changin'.

Did n't hev very long to wait,
  Till the children come a-flockin';
Made me think when I 's a boy,
  A hangin' up my stockin'.

I allers bleev'd in Santa Claus;
  Them wus my happiest hours;
The nearest I kin liken it
  Is a hummin' bird in flowers.

Three little gals set down by me,
  With joy their faces beamin',
Watchin' the tree with eager eyes,
  An' the presents bright and gleamin',
Wonderin' what they each would git;
  I felt their hearts wus akin'
For fear they 's miss'd (they bein' poor),
  An' no interest in them takin'.

Songs wus sung, and speeches made,
  By little folks an' old 'uns;
Sum was full uv sympathy,
  An' others mighty cold 'uns.
The preacher teched on charity,
  In a purty little story,
Sayin' all who gave the poor
  Would git reward in glory.

Speeches thru', the time 'd come,
  An' the presents now awardin';
They 'd take 'em off an' pass 'em roun',
  Each to their names accordin'.

I watched their faces earnestly
(Fur that wus part my mission),
To them that got, still not content,
An' all the more wus wishin'.

My eyes wus turned to others now,
Them three little ones espyin';
I could tell by the'r lashes wet,
Thet each hed been a cryin'.
"What is yer name, my little girl?"
"Please, sir, my name is 'Mandy.'"
"Did n't they give you any thing?"
"No," she sobbed, "not even candy."

"Ner me, ner me," the others sobbed,
With hearts completely broken;
My eyes wus wet in spite of me,
In my throat wus sumthin' chokin';
My pocket-book in sympathy
Wus out in half a minit,
I did n't stop to count the bills,
But give 'em all 't wus in it.

Their surprisin' look you orter seen,
An' tearless eyes now glisten;
"One minit, please, my little girls,
Will you now kindly listen:

'T wus not myself that giv you this,
It wus my heart that bid it;
If any ask you who I am,
Say Santa Claus who did it."

The deacons in amazement stood,
'T wus past their comprehension,
Hed never seed the likes afore,
I now make bold to mention;
By precept, they hev allers taught;
Preferred it to example,
The reason, plain enough to all,
Although their means wus ample.

I clum upon a bench and talk'd,
An' maybe, now, I hollered,
Wus boun' to tell 'em what I thought,
'Nd the subject well I follered:
I axed 'em why some childrem got
'Nuff things to start a store,
An' others sca'cely anything,
Thet wus desarvin' more?

Now, I can't tell you all I said,
Fer it 'd take too long to du it;
I talk'd at least a half an hour,
'Till the deacons all seed thru it,

An' promised they would make amends
  By the help of Him up higher,
An' invited me to cum next year
  An' bring my wife Marier.

I told Marier when I got home,
  An' this wus our conclusion:
Thet Christmas trees is but a curse,
  A snare an' a delusion;
Ef only one poor little heart
  By some mischance is slighted,
The pleasure ought by all concerned
  Most certainly be blighted.

"STIRRIN' OFF."

Jest 'bout this time o' season,
In the February thaws,
When the lam's is a cavortin'
An' blatin' fer their mas,
'Nd the "stockers" in the straw pile
With 'at awful mangy cough,
Sich as these is all forgotten
When it comes to stirrin' off.

When the sugar camp is open,
'Nd the kittles in a row,
'Nd the front ones jest a whoopin',
'Nd the back ones bilin' slow;
Arter sugar worter 's gethered,
'Nd kivered in the troff,
'Nd the sirup 's clared 'nd settled,
Then we 'll soon be stirrin' off.

Rec'lect the worter drappin'
In the troff so still 'nd clair,
'Nd we 'd hunker down 'nd drink it,
Still a drappin' in our hair;

Rec'lect yit how it tasted,
  Sorter soothin' like 'nd sweet,—
Ef a feller jest could buy it
  You could tap me fer a treat.

Often neighbor boys 'd help us,
  Bilin' worter all night thro';
O, the eggs that we 'd pilfer,
  'D make us think of Easter, too;
'Nd the chickens, what a slaughter!
  Quick as wink their heads we 'd doff;
Yit this pleasure was n't nothin'
  'Long side sugar stirrin' off.

When the sirup 'mences "puttin"
  'Nd makin' yaller doodle hills,
Pap 'd git his cup 'nd worter,
  'Nd drap in waxy pills,
Rap the "gob" agin' the vessel,–
  So 's 'taint too hard n'r soff,—
Then we all prepare fer bizness,
  Fer its purt'ny stirrin' off.

Ev'ry feller with the'r paddle,
  Whittled out o' hick'ry sap,
Gethers 'roun' the sugar fernace,
  Keepin' ev'ry eye on pap

Tell he takes it frum the kittle
'Nd puts it in the coolin' troff;
We eat 'ntil it 'mences grainin',
Then we 'r' plum dun stirrin' off

OCTOBER.

October 's here 'nd we do n't need
No almanack to tell us;
We see it on the flow'rs 'nd leaves,
'Nd vines upon the trellis.
All natur's clothed in brightest hues,
The work of art outviein';
The painters long hev giv it up,
Ther' ain't no use a-tryin'.

Contentment 's seed on ever' thing,
The sun 's so red 'nd lazin',
The cattle 'pear 'bout half asleep
Out in the medder grazin';
'T aint too hot, ner 't aint too cold,
But mix'd in both together,
Jes' the kind we allers hev
Fer Injin summer weather.

Apples must be gether'd now
'Nd put down in the celler—
When Christmas comes aroun' agin
They 'll be so good an' meller;

Rambos, winesaps, northern spy,
Bellflower, 'nd golden pippin;
An' O, the cider that we made,
Thro' rye straws we 'll be sippin'.

Persimmons now are good 'nd ripe,
No puckerin' taste about 'em;
Good 'nuff fer eny man,
Jes' try 'em ef you doubt 'em;
Pawpaws droppin' in the leaves,
So big 'nd rich 'nd yeller,
Eat jes' as many as you kin,
Fer they won't hurt a feller.

Warnuts, hick'ry nuts, pecons,
Are on the house a-dryin';
We 'll hev a party purty soon,
Then they 'll go a flyin';
Oysters scolloped, fried 'nd stewed
Along with turkey dressin',
Apple sass 'nd punkin pie—
October, she 's a blessin'.

Do n't talk to me 'bout lemonade,
Ice cream ner warter melon,
They do n't hev no show at all,
'Mongst things I 've been a-tellin'.

October is the month fer me,
'Nd Autum' 's best o' seasons,
I love 'er best, an' allers will,
An' them 's jes' sum my reasons.

NOVEMBER.

November 's cum 'nd I am glad
  Fer I am ready fer it;
I 've got my house all redded up
  Frum celler to the gurret;
Turn my carpets good side down,
  To save 'em from the trackin'
Uv muddy boots all winter through;
  My stoves, too, show the blackin'.

Brought my flowers in the house,
  To keep poor things frum freezin',
Makes 'em all the purtier,
  Ef they aint in season;
Josh don't take to flowers much,
  Says he thinks I 'm silly,
To burn at least ten cords o' wood,
  To save a tagger lily.

November 's awful bizzy month,
  It 's now we fix fer livin',
Geth'rn corn 'nd killin' hogs,
  'Nd offerin' up Thanksgivin'

To Him who watches over us,
'Nd keeps us all frum starvin';
Ef I was some I 'd be ashamed
Fer bein' so ondesarvin'.

I 'll not mention eny names,
Yit rite in this 'ere section,
Hev n't worked a single lick,
Sence long afore the 'lection;
Allers actin' up so big,
Jest as ef they owns us;
Of all the folks I do despise,
It is them Smiths and Joneses.

Do come out Thanksgivin' Day,
It 'd tickel us amazin',
You then could see jest fer yourselves
The truck we 've been a-raisin';
It 's been a most oncommon year
Fer ev'ry thing a growin',
I would n't be a bit afraid
But we 'd beat 'em all a-showin'.

We 'll dress the turkeys day afore,
Hev ev ry thing a cookin',—
'Nd good 'nd done at twelve o'clock,
Do n't fail, fer we 'll be lookin'.

Thet 's our big house on the hill ;
Ef ye can't find the way, enquire
Of eny body 'long the road
Fer Josh 'nd Aunt Marier.

BLIND PREJUDICE.

I never went much on lodges,
  Of Odd Fellers, Masons 'nd sich,
I s'posed that they wus intended
  Fur the stylish an' the rich.
All their signs, an' grips, an' tokens,
  An' collers an' aprons fine
Wus invented fur city people,
  An' not fer me an' mine.

I own I wus strong agin 'em,
  An' did n't keer who knowed;
I wus shore they wus a-travellin'
  On a mighty onsartin' road.
With the'r awful secret meetin's,
  I know'd it meant no good;
Thet evil wus cumin' frum it,
  To me wus understood.

My wife hed the same opinion,
  An' wus free to speak her mind;
She said she wus awful thankful
  That Reuben never jined.

She hed no fears fer Samuel,
For he seldom traipsed about,
An' then he went to spellin' school
An' cum home soon 's 't was out.

She thought sich awful carry'ns on
Wus 'nuff fer men to do;
But when it cum to wimmen
A-havin' their lodges too,
She could n't help but tell 'em,
Fer she felt in duty bound,
They wus goin' to perdition,
An' wus off o' prayin' ground.

Our prejudice wus shaken
Not more 'n a year ago;
When Sam, he tuck the fevers,
That brought him very low.
An' strangers cum to see him
An' shuck him by the hand.
Why they tuck sich int'rest in him,
I could n't understand.

There wus two each night to see him—
Would you b'leeve me now—
Stood by our Sammy's bedside,
An' bathed his fevered brow?

But what wus most surprisin'—
'T is the truth, I do declare—
They fetched each week some money
An' left it layin' there.

Fer days he lay unconscious
Before the fever broke;
At last his eyes he opened,
An' then our Sammy spoke:
"How long have I been ailin',
It seems so like a dream?"
I told him he cum mighty near
A-crossin' o'er the stream.

He now commenced a mendin',
Yit the strangers still 'd cum,
But as to the meanin' uv it,
They all wus mighty dumb.
Still they fetched the money with 'em
'Till Sam wus well an' out;
That they thought us very needy,
I had n't the slightest doubt.

We had n't an over abundance
Of worldly goods, I know,
But still we wus n't beggars,
An' I p'litely told 'em so.

I said we 'd try to manage,
Tho' we might heft to sell the cow;
They told me it wus due him,
But failed to state jest how.

"Sammy, you 've hed some strangers
Watchin' o'er ye thro' your nap,
Now tell me who they are, my boy?"
"They 're all my brothers, pap."
"Come, come, do n't joke your father;
Please do n't my question dodge."
"I 'm telling you the honest truth,
They 're my brothers in the lodge."

Thet I wus conscience stricken,
Indeed, 't wus no surprise,
To think that I hed slandered them!
This lodge of truest ties.
It only proves the sayin'
That people rant and shout
On subjects they pretend to know,
Yit know the least about.

Prejudice has no eyesight,
An' 't wus the case with me;
There 's no one blinder than the one
That does n't want to see.

I here confess my error,
An' will strive to make amend,
Should any 'gainst the Order speak,
I am ready to defend.

If we could live life over,—
Myself and precious wife,—
We 'd lay aside our prejudice,
Enjoy a happier life;
An' still another thing I 'd do,—
At any rate I 'd try,—
I 'd jine the I. O. O. F. Lodge,
Er know the reason why.

SOCIETY AND ANNIVERSARY POEMS.

*DESERTED EAGLE LAKE HOTEL.

(Near Warsaw, Ind.)

For five successive days here met,
We editors and story rhymers,
So well acquainted did we get,
We felt we were, indeed, "old timers."
With salutations "howdy do,"
We so enjoyed our stay together,
Regretting sadly when 't was through,
'Though quite inclement was the weather.

I took a row at early morn,
Trolling in secluded places,
On my returning, all forlorn,
I welcomed not familiar faces;
For they had flown, I knew not where;
I climbed the steps with trepidation,
The balcony from chair to chair
Was barren of all habitation.

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*Written for and read at a meeting of the W. A. W., at Dayton, Ohio, 1892.

So deep and silent was the gloom,
I could not but be disconcerted;
I searched the spacious dining-room,
And found, alas! it, too, deserted;
In this very room, so recently,
Congenial spirits, prone to mingle,
While gastronomic viands rare
Inspired their muse to prose and jingle.

Melodious voices now are heard,
I recognize the "Quartette Schuman,"
And say to you, upon my word,
The melody was superhuman.
They rendered then the "Bill of Fare,"
From angel-food to leg of mutton;
So varied 't was, I do declare,
'T would charm an epicure or glutton.

I heard "Toast Mistress" audibly,
And in an instant I was seated;
Metho't, indeed, what can this be?
'T was ev'ry word and line repeated.
Would that I could reproduce
Those toast responses heard in fancy,—
Attempting it, 'though, 't is no use,
For they exceeded necromancy.

"Our Friends in Warsaw"—Doctor Hall
Responded with a will so hearty;
Declared he loved us one and all,
And wanted to adopt our party;
Have us return each summer time,
Our bonds of friendship ne'er to sever,
Eulogized our simple rhyme,
Prophesied they 'd live forever.

"Our Southern Guests"—a lovely form
And nymph-like grace, appeared before me;
Her southern accent wrought a charm,
Akin to admiration, o'er me.
She praised at length her northern friends,
Quite lavish in her love bestowing;
Her voice in modulation blends,
As o'er a harp the zephyrs blowing.

"The President." Here Doctor R.
Arose with wit and humor teeming;
(He 's been, indeed, our guiding star,
Throughout our week of love-feast dreaming).
"As for President, I 'm now an ex-,
Have shared your pleasures, hopes and joys,
Descending now from the apex,
I want to just be 'one the boys.'"

He read a wondrous poem then,
Of "Our Life's Voyage," thrilling story;
From infancy, to boyhood, man—
Cast anchor when our locks are hoary;
The final Port is singly made,
And is, indeed, each one's own choosing;
Whether sunshine, or in shade,
The fault our own, if Heaven losing.

"Utopia"—a poem sweet,
By Doctor Venable recited;
It was a rare and happy treat,
And every body was delighted;
Altho' he took us o'er the seas,
The voyage was indeed inspiring;
His metaphors and similes
So grand, we had no thought of tiring.

"The Secretary"—Mistress Brooks,
(O! To her, how great a debtor
Are we who try to publish books;
We fear we may not get a better),
Responded in her happy vein,
Acknowledging our ev'ry token,
Forged anew in friendship's chain,
Wishing it remain unbroken.

"The Course of Empire"—E. F. Ware
Favored us with an oration;
Hesperian, I do declare,
We all enjoyed the innovation.
What eloquence, observe the flow;
Compare it here, I fain would try, sir;
A Demosthenes or Cicero,
As a soda fizz to a western geyser.

It soon escapes as natural gas;
O! for a Franklin with his bottle,
That he might capture it, alas!
He 's with Socrates and Aristotle,
With Webster, Clay, and Pike, Calhoun,
With Prentiss, Douglas, Tyng, and Bacon,
All of whom have died too soon,
For their own good, or I 'm mistaken.

How they 'd quaff this wondrous lore,
That gushes from this mystic mountain
Of master mind, still long for more,
From out this inexhaustive fountain.
The guests with deep emotion sway,
For now he 's reached his peroration;
That speech will ring 'till Gabriel's day,—
Indeed 't will startle all creation.

"Successors of Sappho"—Mistress B.
With acting sponsor Colonel Kinney,
Gesticulating gracefully,
Proved he could not be a ninny.
What charming words of monstrous heft;
Indeed a load for two to handle,
Those graceful gestures right and left,
Delsarte could not hold a candle.

What tenderness and rythmic flow,
As a purling brook with lilies freighted,
We were no longer here below,
But to another world translated.
O! that Sappho could but sit,
And sip this nectar, what entrancement!
An epitome of pathos, wit
She'd glory in her child's advancement.

"Woman"—toasted by her sex,
Was odd, as 't was adroitly treated;
Intricate, 'though not complex
Her sphere, the circuit well completed.
From infancy she followed her,
Throughout her various life's gradation;
From the conclusion, we infer,
She is the noblest of creation.

"A Week of Inspiration Here"—
By B. S. Parker, entertainer,
He felt 't would last us all the year;
The cause of Letters be the gainer.
We 're naught except by labor fraught,
These outings help renew our vigor,
By reason of exchange of thought,
Expand our souls and make us bigger.

A noisy babble now arose
O'er traffic rebate transportation,—
Each tried the trouble to disclose,
At least essayed an explanation.
My chair was given such a lurch,
Beyond my pow'r my posture keeping,
"Remember, sir; you 're not in church,
And can not be excused for sleeping."

Now quite aroused, I rubbed my eyes
(Not caring for a mess of pottage);
I searched the park, to my surprise,
I found Miss Bulah Parks' cottage.
She bade me take the proffered chair,
Remarking, "Is your stay extended?
It must be lonesome over there,
Since the membership have homeward
wended."

The truth just now occurred to me,
Concluded was our annual meeting,
Not *sine die*, *pro tempore*,
We 'll have again our July greeting.
One consolation left for me,
I enjoyed the banquet repetition
All the greater, for you see,
'T was both the price of one admission.

LINES TO AN ODD FELLOW'S TABLE.

Old table, you were much amazed,
  Last meeting night, no doubt,
To hear the motion, you be razed
  At once and tumbled out.
A stylish desk to take your place,
  Proportions grand and great;
That could preside with better grace,
  Than you of low estate.

'T was heartless, 't was outrageous, too,
  To think of such a thing;
The mover must atone to you,
  For thus such sadness bring;
Yet, you had cause almost to laugh,
  To hear the pleadings made
By brothers in your own behalf,
  To you such homage paid.

And yet you merit all they said,
  Beside deserving more
From brothers dear, now with the dead,
  That met in days of yore.

The membership, how very few,
When first your reign begun,
Determined will, and heart so true,
That melted into one.

For 't is our secret of success,—
I would that all might know,—
One purpose, mind and heart possess,
That makes our order grow.
Explaining for this spacious hall,
No doubt you know full well,
The old one was so much too small
For our brotherhood to dwell.

How many faces absent now,
That once you welcomed here?
With meek submission do we bow
To Him that 's ever near.
How many resolutions spread,
Their virtues to extol,
Their memory to live, though dead,
And reverenced by all.

How many sick, distressed, in grief,
By our committee laid;
How many warrants in relief
Were nightly drawn and paid.

How many "details" have you heard
(Or do you remember right),
To watch the sick with kindest word,
Through the vigils of the night.

These hoary-headed brothers dear,
With brows of furrowed care,
How often have you met them here,
When they were young and fair.
Night after night, in silence heard
Our opening service read,
In truth, you noticed every word,
'Till benediction 's said.

Could you but talk, indeed, old friend
We know what you could do,
Instruct us all, we might depend,
And do it nicely, too.
Old table, dear, through briny tears,
We here renew our vow,
You 've served us well for thirty years,
And we 'll protect you now.

CANTON THOMPSON AT CHICAGO.*

(*I. O. O. F., Triennial, 1890.*)

On August 4th we took our leave
For the city of the west,
With stately tread, in uniform,
Chapeaux, emblazoned crest.
Our Canton took possession
Of a Pullman palace car,—
The style displayed by chevaliers
Outrivaled Gould by far.

We talked and sang, the papers read,
Played euchre, cinch and such,
Viewed the plains of "Suckerdom,"
Enjoyed the journey much.
When we reached the busy city,
Our reception, it was grand;
A single soul saluted us
(But forgot to bring the band).

*Read at a banquet given by Dr. Thompson, for whom the Canton was named.

He marched us to our quarters,
In armory, Battery "D."
A room more full of emptiness,
I do not care to see.
Soon other Cantons joined us,
And pitched cots side by side;
The adage, "more the merrier,"
Was truly verified.

We watched the Cantons drilling,
In every move and turn;
It was a splendid schooling,
And we were there to learn.
We could not get proficient
By merely looking on,
So we buckled on our armor,
And soon were out and gone.

We worked indeed in earnest,
Regarding not the heat
That was spoiling our complexions,
And tougher on our feet.
Those prizes loomed before us,
And would not go away;
'T is but stating matters fairly,
That we labored night and day.

E'en in our slumbers, I confess
(In confidence to you),
We kept the cadence of the step,
One, two—one, two—one, two,—
In almost every hour of night,
Throughout the busy din,
'T was "right forward, threes, right,"
Or "Canton, blank, fall in!"

"Canton Thompson, now—fall in!"
That 's what our captain said;
"Attention, left face, right dress,"—
Just notice every head;
"Front, Canton, draw swords!"—
See how nicely done;
"Present swords, carry swords!"—
Movement as of one.

"Support swords, carry swords!"—
Heard you that applause?
"Swords port, carry swords!"—
We wonder what the cause;
"Order swords, carry swords!"—
See us plant our steel;
"Shoulder swords, support swords!"—
More confidence we feel.

"Carry swords, forward,
Guide right, march!"
Throughout the foot movements
Our linen lost its starch.
Our wheels, flanks, obliques and rears,
Were executed fine,
Meriting applause received,
When through and brought in line.

Frightened? I should say so;
Indeed, 't were no surprise,
To face a critic audience
Of fifty thousand eyes.
Had they asked us our cognomen,
Our town wherein we dwell,
We 'd wager pounds to pennies,
Not a chevalier could tell.

Our captain marched us off the field,
Nor did he deign to stop,
Till, reaching a refreshment stand,
He ordered out the pop.
Not a single word was ventured,
Till all had drunk their fill,
When Captain Thurber said, "Well done,
You put up a splendid drill."

There were diverse opinions,
Some thought it wretched bad,
While other members just as sure
'T was the finest drill we 'd had.
We kept arguing the matter
All night, until next day,
When we got the morning papers
To see what they would say.

A jollier set you ne'er will see,
Through your remaining days,
When we found that every paper
Gave Canton Thompson praise;
And in such strong and flattering terms,
I could not help but think,
Our boys had seen the editors
And "antied" up the "chink."

We simply had a jubilee,
So great was our delight;
"What 's the matter with Thompson?"
"She 's—all—right!"
We now were free and easy,
With nothing else to do,
But "have a time," except, of course,
Inspection and review.

And we were far from idle,
That fact I 'm here to tell;
We sailed the lake, and did the parks,
Nor missed the "big hotel."
We took in Libby Prison,
And Rome before the Fall,
Yet I confess the fireworks
Was the grandest sight of all.

Awarding prizes now had come,
And we were ordered out;
That we would get a small award,
There was but little doubt.
It almost knocked us silly,—
It did, upon my word,—
When we read Four Hundred Dollars,
By winning Prize the Third!

A surprise again in store for us,
We could scarce believe our eyes;
Our captain as commander,
Had taken second prize.
A half a hundred 's not so bad
Any way it 's put;
'T was well "worth the admission"
To see our captain strut.

Our Canton now is thriving well,—
For good looks can't be beat;
Should we have an opportunity,
We 'll of course again compete.
For we have money in the bank,
So you need not fret or fuss,
For when we next go for the prize
We 'll bring it back with us.

We thank our host and chevalier,
His son and daughter, too,
For generous hospitality,—
We 're glad we 're named for you.
May all our noble chevaliers
Avoid reproach and shame,
That you may never regret, sir,
Our Canton bears your name.

FRIENDSHIP, LOVE AND TRUTH.

How sweet the lesson we are taught,
  Of Jonathan and David, too,
Their lives were full of danger fraught,
  Apply it now to me and you.
No matter what the world may say,
  I am your friend, and you my brother,
As sure as night succeeds the day,
  We 've sworn it, one unto the other.

Friendship's strong endearing ties
  Are something never to be broken ;
The heart is where the fountain lies,
  The soul the stream, the eye the token.
Friendship's grasp, so warm and true,
  None can ever doubt its meaning;
The touch so gentle thrills you through,
  The heart, though hidden, has no screening.

Love, that mystery complete,
  Has sway'd the world for countless ages ;
By poets praised in sonnets sweet,
  Philosophers, and e'en the sages.

Those who weep for others' woes,
Have love at heart by far the deepest;
The lowest valley always shows
The highest mountain and the steepest.

"Love your neighbor as yourself"
Not only taught, but are commanded,
And further, do not hoard your pelf,
For Charity is open-handed.
You see a brother in distress,
Your scanty purse with him divide, sir;
Do n't be like some in costly dress,
Pass by upon the other side, sir.

A virtue that is most essential,—
Truth, that attribute divine;
I know of nothing more potential;
E'en falsehood does not dare malign.
The man of Truth is best and strongest;
In whom we all can put our trust.
His memory will live the longest,
His words and actions always just.

His soul is like a crystal river,
Reflecting heaven's celestial light,
In imitation of the Giver,
Except in being lesser bright;

He wins respect without the asking,
  Purifies and blesses all;
In heaven's sunlight ever basking,
  But waiting for the Master's call.

TO MAJOR W. C. GRIFFITH.

(*On his 93d birthday.*)

In seventeen hundred ninety-seven,
On a bright November's thirtieth morn
A little baby boy was given—
Unto Nathan Griffith born.
He was christened William Chinnoweth,
In Pennsylvania, so they say;
Will tell you something of this baby,
Who now is getting old and gray.

His father moved into Kentucky,
And put young William into school;
His bent of mind was architecture—
With mallet, chisel, plummet, rule,
He built a Catholic Cathedral,
When scarcely nineteen years of age,
And scores of wondrous calculations,
That would do credit to a sage.

In eighteen seventeen he married
A lovely maiden, Miss McGrew;
William always called her Fanny,
She was good, and handsome, too.
They moved to Hoosierdom thereafter,
In Orange county, Corydon,
Applied his chosen avocation,
He friends and some distinction won.

He developed largely military,
So marked his discipline and will;
He held commission, that of Major,
And answers to that title still.
No daring deeds on fields of carnage,
No long campaigns, privations great;
His authority was rather local,
Controlled militia of the State

He mastered civil engineering;
So great proficiency he showed,
Was called to supervise the building
Of the famous National Road.
Full sixty years have come and vanished
Since that contract, then of fame,
Yet the grading and abutments
Stand monumental to his name

He never was an office-seeker,
Yet a few were on him thrust;
Throughout his terms of public service
He was ever faithful to his trust.
He always felt his word of honor
Was far above ill-gotten gain,
"A good name better far than riches,"
This he always did maintain.

For seventeen presidents he voted,
His initial ballot, James Monroe;
This was down in old Kentucky,
More than seventy years ago.
'T is scarce the while to make the statement,
In exercising suffrage, he
Has cast his vote on all occasions
On the side of old Democracy

How vastly great are our possessions,
Stretching 'round from lake to sea,
Costing lives and mints of money
And years of untold misery.
What great discoveries in science,
Inventions wondrous to behold,
Developments our country 's witnessed
In fertile lands, in fields of gold.

The power of steam was undiscovered,
  Electricity was running wild,
But now these elements are bridled,
  And governed even by a child.
Resulting steam power transportation,
  On the waters, o'er the lands,
Driving looms, and mills, and presses,
  Employing almost countless hands.

The bridled lightning, what a wonder!
  By its aid we need not walk,
Can furnish light for every nation,
  And absolutely it can talk.
More in detail let us mention
  Telegraphy o'er land and sea,
Electric carriages and railways,
  And many phones of mystery.

Our country 's spider-webbed with wires,
  Just press the button anywhere,
It will respond to do our bidding,
  Even to navigate the air.
It 's used to heal the sick, afflicted,
  It 's used to kill the criminal, too,
The question naturally arises,
  Is there any thing it can not do?

We 've abandoned sickle for the binder,
  Abandoned stage coach for the rail,
We have steam rollers 'gainst the mortar,
  We have steam threshers 'gainst the flail.
But returning to our agéd father,
  Who 's watched these changes come about,
Possibly with some misgiving,
  Before accepting them, no doubt.

For more than fifty years they plodded
  Life's rugged road, as man and wife;
They feasted at their golden wedding,
  Recounting years of happy life.
Happy, yet, with many crosses,
  That 's interwoven at our door,
May be 't is of God's designing,
  The sweets of life enjoy the more.

Twelve children came to bless this union,
  Among that number four are left;
The saddest day for any husband,
  The day he is of wife bereft.
Some twenty years since Fanny left him,
  He 's plodding on with staff in hand,
Only waiting for the summons
  To join her in that better land.

Three score and ten is what 's allotted
To us mortals here on earth,
Yet the days are oft extended
To the ones of greatest worth.
We can not hope to have him with us
A great deal longer, this we know,
Yet if he should reach a hundred,
We 'd be loath to see him go.

We then should try to make him happy,
Help while away his weary hours,
Dispel the gloomy clouds with sunshine,
Secrete the thorns with pretty flowers.
All join with me in hearty wishes,
For his health will ever pray;
He may be spared to live among us,
Enjoy returns of his natal day.

TO J. B. PATTON AND WIFE

(*Silver Wedding Anniversary.*)

Ring out the wedding bells to-night,
Of silver metal cast;
Those silver chimes speak out aright,
A quarter century 's past
Since at the altar you were wed,
As blushing bride and groom.
Roses blush at times, 't is said,
How soon they shed their bloom.

How very different 't is with you—
This is no flattery, I vow,—
Fresh as rosebuds, kissed with dew,
Is your appearance now.
Although the groom has silver'd hair—
I would that all might know,—
Underneath he 's young and fair
As a myrtle under snow.

The bride has streaks of silver, too,
I do not dare presage,
E'en give an inkling here to you,
As regards a woman's age.
Yet this can say without a fear
(It may be just my whim),
The reason that the streaks appear,
Is sympathy with Jim.

She gave me my first thought of fame,
She used to roach my hair,
And teach me speeches to declaim
From off our kitchen stair.
'T was really wrong in her, I know
(For I lost it by degrees),
I hoped to rival Cicero,
And down Demosthenes.

The bride, I quite remember well,
Was a charming pedagogue;
The groom (although I 'm loath to tell),
He used to pettifog.
He still went on from bad to "wuss,"
This fact I now recall,
He finally represented us
In the legislative hall.

If 't were not for the "chestnut bell,"
And the stigma on us cast,
I 'd say he found a convict cell
In Prison South at last.
His length of term, I can not say,
In truth there 's little doubt
But what he really wants to stay
Till the directors turn him out.

My pleasantries now over,
No doubt you all are glad;
A better Prison Warden
Our State has never had.
There was a large deficit
When Patton took command,
Now tell me, friends, how is it?
There 's a bank account on hand!

The "pen" is self-sustaining,
Its discipline complete,
Its guards in splendid training,
Its convicts clean and neat.
Much praise due Warden Patton,
On him all can rely,
He brought order out of chaos,
He 's our uncle, that is why.

Not always sunshine, I confess,
Throughout these many years,
Some days were full of joyousness,
While others full of tears.
Those little ones in days of yore,
And from you called away,
Are happy on that golden shore,
Where all is endless day.

Though you have had afflictions sore,
Of darling ones bereft,
You should take comfort all the more
In the ones you still have left.
They 'll be to you a solace sweet,
And spoken of in praise,
As guardian angels for your feet
In your declining days.

We regret we can not be with you
On your silver wedding night,
Accept these verses then in lieu
Of the one who tries to write,
And sends congratulations great,
And choicest blessings pray,
That you may live to celebrate
Your golden wedding day.

LINES TO J. L. S.

(Acknowledging a Prairie Chicken.)

Friend Jo: I thank you for the bird
You kindly gave to me,
And say to you, upon my word
'T was luscious as could be.
We followed closely your advice,—
Many thanks to you, kind sir,—
The bird was voted very nice,
And you a caterer.

Stuffed with oysters through and through,
And baked so brown and done,
'T was then we wished, alas! for you
To join us in the fun.
You know to stuff a bird quite well
Is something of an art.
In this, we all tried to excel—
At least each took a part.

All worked in earnest, I confess,
  The time begrudging not.
The bird the while was growing less,
  None other in the pot.
A case like this you may have heard,—
  If not, it ended thus :
In fact we did not stuff the bird,
  But 't was the bird stuffed us.

EPIGRAMMATIC.

STAGE DECEPTION.

I saw her almost ev'ry night,
This charming little creature;
To see her act was my delight,
Child-like in ev'ry feature.
Her petite form, so trim and neat,
With rosy lips, half parted,
The childish part did act so sweet,
No wonder I was started

"Fanchon" was the role she played
I could not but admire her;
The play was ended, I delayed,
To ask her, did it tire her?
I boldly walked behind the scene,
My feelings could not smother,
A young man shouted to my queen:
"Let 's exit this way, mother."

MISTAKEN IDENTITY.

T was a dreary hour, as a druggist sat
Alone in his store one day,
Stroking the back of his tabby cat,
To drive the "blues" away.

In the open door a customer stepped,
And glided forth with ease,
He called to the man that poisons kept,
"A pound of arsenic, please."

The druggist's visage became aglow,
At prospect of profit so large,
When labeled, the customer wanted to know
The time o' day, also the charge.

"An ounce for a quarter just over the way,
The time, it lacks twenty to three,
A pound for one-fifty is plenty to pay,
I will not extortionate be."

But you must remember," the customer said,
"That I keep a drug store, too."
The druggist replied, as he lowered his head,
"'T will be fifteen cents to you."

PREMONITIONS.

Do I believe in premonitions?
(Forewarnings often come in dreams)
I 'll tell this story for my answer,
What happened Hezekiah Deems.
He long had been our nearest neighbor,
His farm joined mine upon the west,
We swapped work nearly every season,
Of all my neighbors, he was best.

He came one morning bright and early,
By his manner I could see
That something wonderful had happened,
And he 'd come to tell it me.
We walked out in the apple orchard,
'Kiah took me by the hand,
Said he, "I 've something strange, Josiah,
Something I can 't understand.

"Last night I went to bed as usual,
Was sleeping soundly. Pretty soon
I heard a voice repeating to me,
'You-will-die-the-first-of-June.

I sat upright in bed in horror
('T is but an idle dream, I thought),
I slept again, but soon awakened,
It but a repetition brought.

"More in detail to advise me,
Speaking solemn like and low,
'On–June–the–first–at–twelve–precisely–
Be–ye–ready–then–to–go.'"
Great drops of sweat ran down his features,
When to me his story through,
"That 's superstition, Hezekiah,
I 'd laugh it off, if I were you."

He said it was no laughing matter,
Would disregard it if he dared,
The premonition was explicit,
It was best to be prepared.
This was first of April, mind you,
Just two months to set aright,
Spiritual and temporal matters,
Edict of that awful night.

He mapped his work with great precision,
He followed closely every plan,
He made his peace with God in Heaven,
He made his will 'twixt man and man;

He marked the spot wherein to slumber,
  He purchased coffin, shroud and all,
His monument of neat designing
  Was strangely unpretentious, tall.

Upon it chiseled this inscription,
  "Died upon the first of June,
Hezekiah Deems, aged sixty,
  At twelve precisely, just at noon."
At last the fated day was ushered,
  His friends and neighbors all stood by,
His family grouped about his bedside,
  To watch their father, husband die.

I grasped his hand with deep emotion,
  Just as the awful moment came,
He closed his eyes and shuddered slightly,
  And—kept on living just the same.
Do I believe in premonitions?
  (Forewarnings often come in dreams)
The story told you is my answer,
  What happened Hezekiah Deems.

NONE PERFECT, NO, NOT ONE.

He is brimming full of knowledge,
For a graduate of college,
He is far above the average in all the classic lore;
Quoting Byron, Pope, and Chaucer,
And is learned in the law, sir,
In rhetorical effusion, he is ever prone to soar

Throughout his business dealing
There 's security of feeling,
Not a single intimation 'gainst his honesty is heard
His reputation is for paying,
That it goes without the saying,
His bonded obligation is no better than his word.

Being always frank and candid,
He is also open-handed,
To deserving calls of charity he is ever free to give;
In divers lodges he 's a member,
From Jan. to bleak December,
A more consistent brother in the lodges does not live.

He in Sunday-school is teacher,
Talking very like a preacher,
Not a single text throughout the book but what the fellow knew ;
From Genesis to Revelations,
He is full of explanations,
On ev'ry Sunday morning you will find him in his pew.

In story books of fiction,
He has a strong restriction,
Even Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, to endorse it he is loath ;
Just let him go on angling,
The finny tribe entangling,
The report he brings we can 't believe this fellow under oath.

PROHIBITION.

I saw the charming lady oft
  While passing through the city;
Becoming bold, my hat I doffed,
  She was exceeding pretty.
She sweetly smiled and nodded slight,
  In manner quite demurely,
I promised I would call that night—
  She was an angel surely.

Her complexion was a strong brunette,
  Her eyes would shame the doe, sir;
With wavy hair as black as jet,
  A figure proud to show, sir.
I called and asked her to be mine,
  In answer did not tarry,
"Kind sir, there is an awful fine
  For whites and blacks to marry."

SYMPATHY FROM BELOW.

Old Satan quite recent observed, "I declare,
My business is horribly slack;
I 'll visit Chicago, and loiter up there,
When my quota is full, will be back."
A middle-weight suiting His Majesty chose
To don, for this outing to take;
"They tell me 'a norther' incessantly blows
From over great Michigan Lake."

So sallying upward, he traversed the space
In an inkling, almost, I aver;
Not troubled the slightest to locate the place,
Because of its racket and stir.
The day was advanced as he made his advent
In the famous Columbian town,
He noticed the neglige shirts as he went,
And the old Mother Hubbard's thin gown

Surprised at the clothing the people had on,
He was anxious their faces to scan,
Which they mopped with a kerchief ever anon;
Each person was armed with a fan

And plied with a vigor unequaled by none
(Barring 'lectrical motors, of course);
Umbrellas they hoisted to ward off the sun,
That was gaining unparalleled force.

His Majesty calling the people about,
"I have been misinformed, I 'm afraid;
Your climate is hotter than mine, no doubt,
For it 's now hundred-one in the shade.
I sympathize with you so sorely distressed,
Your condition appalling to see,
Whenever you 're needing a season of rest,
Come spend your vacation with me."

HER CONFESSION.

Good-bye, old shoes, with deep regret,
  These words are spoken now to you,
What solid comfort you beget,
  At last your pilgrimage is through.
Dilapidated, creeled and worn,
  Suggestive not of worldly pelf,
Of beauty ev'ry vestige shorn,
  No semblance of your former self.

When first you did my pedals girt
  ('T is hard to stifle woman's pride),
I now confess how much you hurt
  My soft excrescence till I cried.
'T was all my fault, I now confess
  My error, ere I set you free,
For you were just two numbers less
  Than Nature had designed for me.

THE AWFUL SECRET.

"Agnes, I have learned a secret,
And I 've come to tell you true,
Darling, we must part forever,
For 't is best for me and you.
I own I love you, truly, madly,
That you 're my affianced wife;
O, this parting grieves me sadly!
Just as well to take my life."

"Charley, tell the awful secret,
Do not keep me in suspense,
Tell me quickly, let me hear it
That I may make my own defense."
"Must I tell you what 's the matter,
Though my throbbing heart it breaks?
You do n't know how to mix the batter
Mother bakes in buckwheat cakes."

HIS REGRETS.

A man gave a banquet, I recently read,
  His guests had all entered his door,
With a single exception, one person, 't is said,
  Who subscribed himself always, "A. Moore."
The host was impatient for guest over due,
  Yet, withal, the suspense it was brief;
The postman announced, "Here 's a letter for you,"
  The enclosure, a syc-a-more leaf.

ABSENT-MINDED, VERY.

It was at a steam-boat landing
That this incident occurred;
I upon the deck was standing,
And I give it word for word.

Now the shipping-clerk repeated,
"Here 's your chickens, calf and cow,
Bedstead, bedding, stove and table,
One-horse wagon, mule and plow.

'This is certain all the plunder
That the way-bill seems to show,
Stand no longer there in wonder,
Get your family, sir, and go."

"Them 's 'em, durn 'em, them 's 'em, Mister,
I know'd mighty, tarnel well,
Thar war som'at else a-comin',
But dog my cats ef I could tell."

The stranger to the cabin hurried,
In passing, ordered out a drink;
He laid the money on the counter,
And started off as quick as wink.

"Look here stranger," quoth the tender,
Laughing though he's like to burst,
"I know you want to make this landing,
But wont you drink this 'pizen' first?"

THINGS WE MAY FORGET.

We may forget the many ills
  Our lives were forced to bear;
Of measles, whooping-cough and chills,
  To 'scape e'en one was rare.
How oft at meals we had to wait
  When company folks were there,
How often we at school were late,
  Or missed our evening pray'r.

We may forget a hundred things
  In childhood we have met,
There 's one thing to our mem'ry clings
  That we never can forget;
'T was met in early childhood, too,
  Yet so vivid, I opine,—
The dose your mother gave to you
  Of oil and turpentine.

MY RESOLUTION.

I had a dream the other night
I shall not soon forget,
In truth it gave me such a fright,
Have n't half recovered yet.
Methought 't was at a boarding-house,
The steak was rather tough,
I chewed, and chewed, and chewed the steak,
Still not chewed half enough.

My tired jaws refused to go,
I felt, alas! I 'd choke;
The bite I tried to overthrow,
In the effort I awoke.
This resolution I have made,
And e'en propose to keep,
"To lay aside my chewing gum.
Before I go to sleep."

A TRAIN INCIDENT.

'T was on the train I met her—
Angel fair:
Nor can I soon forget her
Golden hair;
She was indeed entrancing,
Her bewitching eyes were dancing
And mine on hers were glancing
I declare.

But soon I saw her gaping—
I looked no more:
I knew she felt like napping—
What a bore.
Conductor, fares was reaping,
As the train was onward leaping,
Yet, I knew that she was sleeping
By her snore.

Conductor stopped to wake her
(Charming miss),
I whisper'd, "Sir! Do take her
Fare from this;"

She will reimburse me truly
And will thank me too, unduly,
And will think me just a "lula"—
O! what bliss.

She woke; we talked together
Many a mile:
She was buoyant as a feather,
Th' hours beguile;
She 'd reached her destination,
I remarked, with hesitation,
"Miss, your fare!" Her explanation
Was a smile.

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